

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 279262

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, MA

SUBJECT:AFRO-AMERICAN LABOR CENTER AID FOR FMM

ADDIS FOR CALDWELL, PARIS FOR CONDON

1. ON NOV. 10 BUREAU LABOR ADVISOR AND DESK OFFICER MET WITH DAVID BROMBART OF AFRO-AMERICAN LABOR CENTER (AALC) TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE TO FMM LABOR UNION IN MADAGASCAR. DISCUSSED MEETING BETWEEN CHARLES RANDRIANATORO, SECRETARY GENERAL OF FMM, AND REGIONAL LABOR ADVISOR CALDWELL IN TANANARIVE AUGUST 4. STRONG PITCH FOR FUNDS WAS MADE BY RANDRIANATORO ON BASIS OF FMM OPPOSITION TO COMMUNIST FUNDED FISEMA, AKFM UNION.

2. CALDWELL IN SEPTEMBER 5 LETTER TO AALC FELT PRESENT ATMOSPHERE IN TANANARIVE "INAUSPICIOUS FOR ANY NEW DEPARTURES OR INITIATIVES," BUT SOLICITED VIEWS OF BROMBART ON QUESTION. BROMBART TOLD DEPARTMENT THAT GIVEN DESPERATE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF FMM AND POSSIBILITY
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THAT THEY MAY BE FORCED INTO MERGER WITH FISEMA, SOME

ASSISTANCE MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE. MAIN OBJECTIVE WOULD BE TO IMPROVE FMM BARGAINING POSITION IN CASE OF MERGER.

3. IT WAS NOTED THAT PREVIOUS PLANS TO AID FMM HAD BEEN OPPOSED BY EMBASSY FOR FEAR OF DAMAGING OUR RELATIONS WITH RAMANANTSOA GOVERNMENT, WHICH REGARDED FMM AS ARM OF PSD OPPOSITION. IT NOW MUST BE DECIDED, HOWEVER IF AALC ASSISTANCE TO FMM WILL HAVE MUCH EFFECT ON OUR ALREADY POOR RELATIONS WITH RATSIRAKA GOVERNMENT, AS OPPOSED TO FURTHERING WIDER US INTEREST IN SUPPORTING FREE LABOR MOVEMENTS. ASSISTANCE REQUESTED WOULD CONSIST OF DOLS. 8000 FOR PAST DEBTS AND DOLS. 8000 GRANT TO HELP WITH CURRENT OFFICE EXPENSES. BROMBART FELT AALC INCLINED TOWARD DOLS. 4000 TOTAL FOR CURRENT EXPENSES. WOULD BE MORAL SUPPORT MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE. AALC SEES ANY ASSISTANCE GRANTED TO THIS REQUEST TO TAKE FORM OF ONE-TIME IMPACT FUND PROJECT. BROMBART ALSO STATED THAT POSSIBILITY EXISTED FOR COOPERATION WITH FRENCH ORGANIZATION "FORCE OEUVRIERE" ON ASSISTANCE PROJECT.

4. DEPT WOULD LIKE TO HAVE VIEWS OF EMBASSY AND CALDWELL ON PROPOSAL, EMPHASIZING GOMR REACTION AND STATUS OF FMM AS VIABLE ORGANIZATION. COMMENTS RE: FEASIBILITY OF JOINT AALC-FO PROJECT OR OF FO AS PRIME SOURCE OF ASSISTANCE ALSO REQUESTED. KISSINGER

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